How to choose the right approach to analytics and reporting

A comprehensive comparison of the open source and commercial versions of the OpenText™ Analytics Suite

In today's digital world, organizations need to process ever-larger, more complex, and more varied sources of data. They also face growing demands from employees, customers, and partners to engage with information on a self-service basis, quickly, easily, and on any device.

Many organizations underestimate both the impact of presenting better intelligence and the effort required to deliver it in a scalable, secure, understandable manner to an ever-growing user base. This can quickly lead to IT overload and reports that do not harness or provide deep insight into the large amounts of data businesses need to make smart, agile decisions.
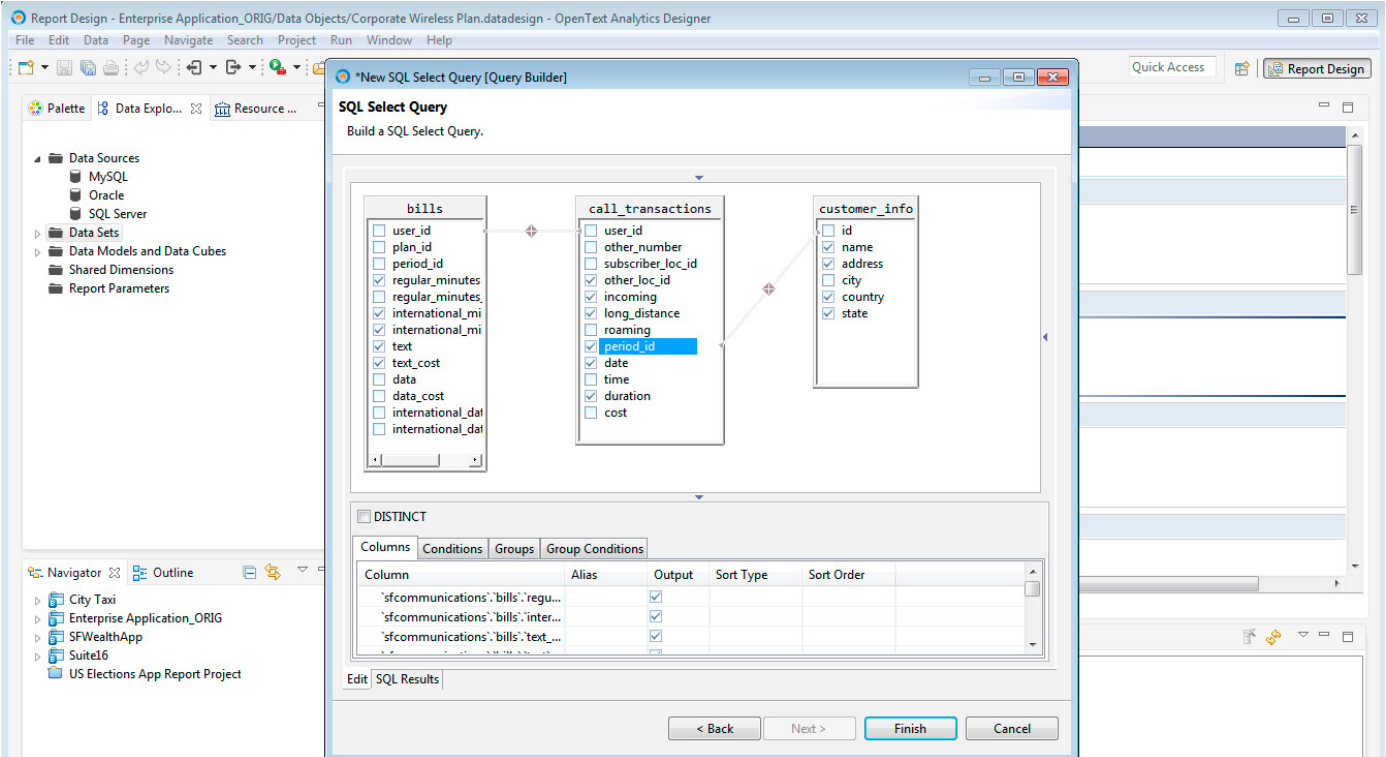
The OpenText Analytics Suite does not force you into a one-size-fits-all approach. This document will help you navigate how best to match your design, deploy, and display requirements with features of open source BIRT and the OpenText Analytics Suite's Information Hub (iHub) feature. SaaS providers, software vendors, and appliance manufacturers can also choose to employ OpenText Analytics Java Components (AJC), which comes with its own deployment kit to embed specific analytics capabilities for lighter-weight architecture.

Or, for a wider range of design options, they can opt for the Analytics Designer feature of OpenText Analytics. This graphical, drag-and-drop design tool and IDE, based on Eclipse™ BIRT, lets developers create reusable development components, assemble them into interactive applications, dashboards, and personalized business reports, and then—with one click—deploy them securely to iHub and embed them into custom applications.

The OpenText™ Analytics Suite is built on the foundation of Eclipse™ BIRT, a powerful open-source IDE for data visualization and analytics that the company co-founded and supports. With more than 3.5 million developers and more than 13 million product downloads, BIRT is the leading open-source reporting and visualization IDE for developers worldwide. The BIRT runtime engine is at the core of the OpenText™ Information Hub (iHub) feature of OpenText Analytics, but is also available independently.

iHub is a secure, highly scalable deployment platform that can transform BIRT libraries, templates, and designs into rich, interactive dashboards and reports, helping users derive more value from their data with no need for ongoing IT involvement. Its modular, low-code approach makes developers more productive, enabling them to easily build and integrate visually appealing data visualizations into any application. A broad set of APIs allows iHub developers to meet any custom requirement, such as white-labeling, extending features, or connecting to custom data sources.
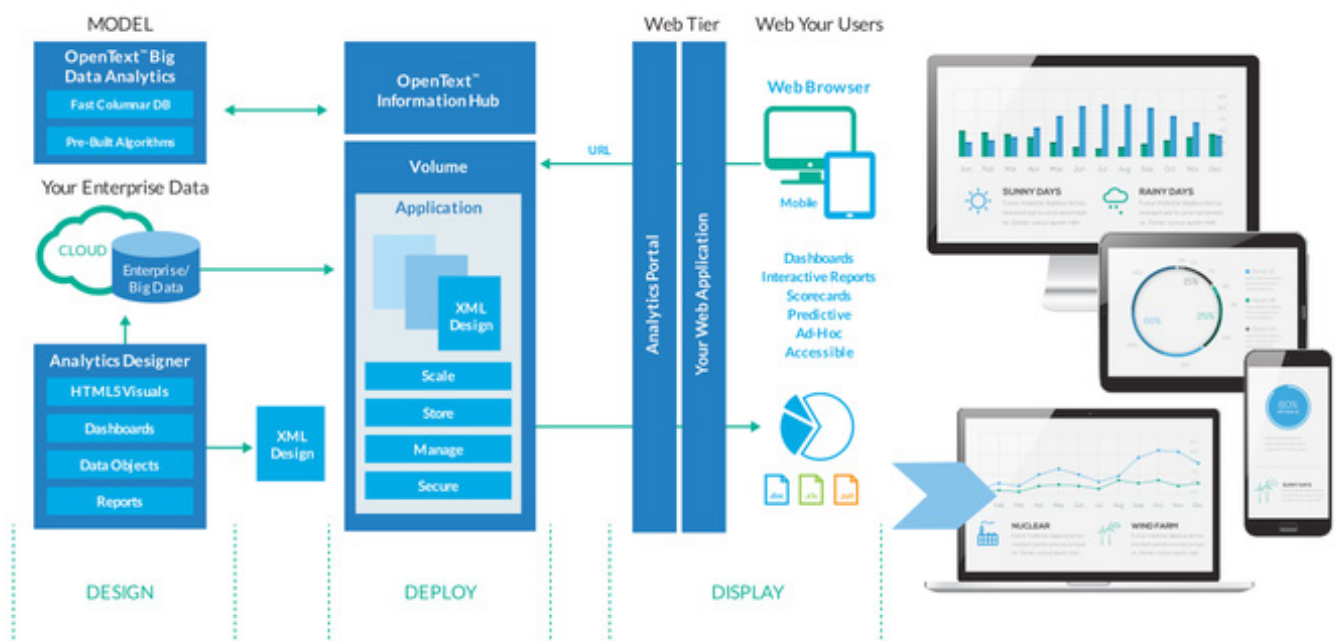
Design functionality	Eclipse BIRT designer	OpenText™ Analytics Designer
License	Eclipse public license open source	Commercial license
Create designs for OpenText™ Information Hub		
Use WYSIWYG page design to develop HTML, PDF, or .xls reports	•	•
Extend reports and integrate BIRT Java class libraries into applications using Java coding	•	•
Create a reusable foundation and templates for branding, ad-hoc content, dashboards, and applications	•	•
Rich and interactive HTML5 charts, geo-spatial maps, and gadgets/meters		•
Include/embed external HTML5 content in iHub designs		•
Develop interactive dashboards		•
Custom visualization		•
Produce accessible PDFs for the visually impaired		•
Metadata layer to simplify end-user view		•
Data access and modeling		
Integrate data from multiple and custom sources	•	•
Out-of-the-box sources through connectors such as JDBC, scripted, POJO, REST, and Web Services	•	•
Big data sources, such as Hadoop®, Amazon Redshift, Apache® Hbase® via Hive, Mongo DB®, Cloudera Hadoop, and Impala	•	•
Commercial JDBC drivers for Oracle®, Salesforce®, DB2®, SQL Server®, SparkSQL, and Cassandra		•
Use BIRT reports as data source		•
Define intelligent, multi-dimensional, in-memory cubes using BIRT Data Model		•
Security		
Controlled data access	•	•
Provide granular security down to page level and role-level security		•

Report design shown in the OpenText Analytics Suite's Analytics Designer feature

Deploy functionality	BIRT runtime engine	iHub	AJC with deployment kit
License	Eclipse public license open source	Commercial license	Commercial license ISVs only
Distribution and output			
Export reports in HTML, PDF, CSV, and Microsoft® Office file formats	•	•	•
Email distribution		•	
Alerts and notification		•	
Manage files and folders with web interface (Information Console)		•	•
Integration			
Embed content into applications via URLs	•	•	•
Seamlessly embed report content into applications via parameters and iHub JavaScript API, Web Services API, and REST API		•	•
Brand and customize Information Console (see above)		•	
Content management			
Event and time-based scheduling		•	
On-demand content generation		•	•
From a single design, run secured and personalized reports for many users		•	
Multi-tenancy—shared services for multiple applications		•	
Store, version, and archive content		•	

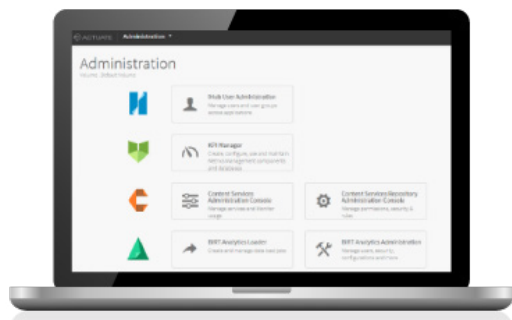| Deploy functionality	BIRT runtime engine	iHub	AJC with deployment kit
License			
Administration and security			
Administration tools to easily manage, configure, and monitor system/cluster		•	
User and role-based security		•	
Logging and Monitoring System with built-in reporting and analysis		•	
Single Sign-On authentication		•	•
External Security Integration (LDAP), e.g. Active Directory®		•	
Deployment services			
Serve users inside and outside the firewall		•	•
Implement server clustering		•	
Enable admins to make configuration changes on the fly		•	
Add near-linear scalability with elastic clustering		•	
High-availability architecture with no single point of failure		•	
Cloud deployment		•	

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Display functionality	BIRT runtime engine	iHub	AJC with deployment kit
License	Eclipse public license open source	Commercial license	Commercial license ISVs only
Viewing			
View static reports	●	●	●
View static spreadsheet-style data	●	●	●
Mobile viewing			
Supports HTML5-based visualizations on all mobile devices		●	
Supports embedding content on any mobile device via APIs		●	
Interactive viewing			
Save, link to, print,and export reports in CSV, XML, HTML, AFP, PostScript, PDF, and Microsoft Office formats		●	●
Export and save offline content as analysis-ready Microsoft® Excel® files with live formulas, charts, and PivotTables		●	●
Provide built-in table of contents, parameter collection features including date picker, multi-page navigation, and URL links for content		●	●
Export content and data in multiple formats without re-execution of the report		●	●
Demand paging—jump to any page in report		●	●
Progressive viewing—expedites delivery of document pages as their rendering is being completed by the OpenText Analytics engine		●	●
Link to report pages for sharing documents		●	●
Sort, filter, and group report data		●	●
Move, hide, show, compute, and delete columns and items		●	●
Create new aggregations		●	●
Hide detail-level information to create summary report		●	●
Add and remove page breaks		●	●
View HTML5 charts, graphs, and gadgets		●	●
Modify, align, and format text and numbers		●	●
Manipulate Interactive Crosstabs and generate live PivotTables		●	●
Save modified reports and report designs		●	●
Include enterprise data, formulas, formatting, and live charts		●	●
Access predefined multi-dimensional data objects		●	●

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Display functionality	BIRT runtime engine	iHub	AJC with deployment kit
Produce multi-dimensional reports and analyses		•	•
Visualize data to identify trends and spot anomalies		•	•
Perform root cause analysis by linking to operational data		•	
Dashboard			
Utilize iHub dashboards		•	
Provide dashboards specific to the needs of users, role, and projects		•	
Allow users to build and extend/modify dashboards without assistance from IT		•	
Enable users to add components pre-built by IT from Library to dashboard		•	
Design performance management reports showing KPIs and metrics		•	
Ad-hoc reporting			
Enable users to develop reports from predefined data sources and iHub templates		•	•
Give users ad-hoc tools to create, modify, and view iHub content		•	•
Accelerate design process by facilitating collaboration between end users and IT		•	•
Integrates with the OpenText Analytics Big Data Analytics feature and enables self service		•	
Supports Smart Web Layout		•	
Provides an easy hyperlink builder		•	
Comes with easy data previewing capabilities		•	
Ships with a rich set of data visualizations		•	

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OpenText™ Information Hub, Trial Edition
Download and Try Now

The OpenText Analytics iHub, Trial Edition, is a free, fully functional 45-day trial version of the enterprise-grade deployment server that is a feature of the OpenText Analytics Suite. It includes multiple sample applications, reports, and dashboards that help you understand how to design, deploy, and embed analytics into your application.

Download iHub trial version

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